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SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE ALLA 28MA SESSIONE SPECIALE DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE DELLE NAZIONI UNITE PER LA COMMEMORAZIONE DEL SESSANTESIMO ANNIVERSARIO DELLA LIBERAZIONE DEI CAMPI DI CONCENTRAMENTO NAZISTI

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Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, il Nunzio Apostolico S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha pronunciato ieri alla 28ma Sessione Speciale dell'Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite per la commemorazione del sessantesimo anniversario della liberazione dei campi di concentramento nazisti:

• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE

Mr President,

My delegation warmly welcomes the initiative which has brought about this special session of the General Assembly, commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps by Allied Forces.

It affords us another opportunity solemnly to recall the victims of an inhuman political vision based upon an extreme ideology. It reminds us too of the roots of this Organisation itself, of its noble goals and of the political will still needed to prevent such horrors ever happening again.

Today we contemplate the consequences of intolerance, as we recall all those who were targeted by the political and social engineering of the Nazis, elaborated on a tremendous scale and employing deliberate and calculated brutality. Those considered unfit for society – the Jews, the Slavonic peoples, the Roma people, the disabled, homosexuals, among others – were marked for extermination; those who dared oppose the regime by word and deed – politicians, religious leaders, private citizens – often paid for their opposition with their lives. Conditions were so designed as to make human beings lose their essential dignity and divest themselves of every human decency and sentiment.

The death camps are also witnesses to an unprecedented plan for the deliberate, systematic extermination of a whole people, the Jewish people. The Holy See has recalled on numerous occasions with a sense of deep sorrow the sufferings of the Jews in the crime now known as the *Shoah*. Taking place during one of the darkest chapters of the twentieth century, it stands alone, remaining a shameful stain on the history of humanity and upon the conscience of all.

During his visit to Auschwitz in 1979, Pope John Paul the Second stated that we must let the cry of the people martyred there change the world for the better, by drawing the right conclusions from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Mr President,

In a century marked by man-made catastrophes, the Nazi death camps are a particularly sobering reminder of "man's inhumanity to man" and of his capacity for evil. Nevertheless, we should remember that humankind is also capable of great good, of self-sacrifice and altruism. When natural or human calamities strike, as we have seen even in recent weeks, people display the best side of human society, with solidarity and brotherhood, and sometimes at personal cost. In the context of today's commemoration, we need only think of those courageous people from all walks of society, many of whom have been recognised as "Righteous among the Nations". All peoples of the world are capable of great good, a thing often achieved through education and moral leadership. And to all this we should add a spiritual dimension that, while it must not give false hope or glib explanations, will help us maintain humility, perspective and resolve in the face of terrible events.

For this reason my delegation welcomes this chance to remember the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps, so that humanity not forget the terror of which man is capable; the evils of arrogant political extremism and social engineering; and the need to build a safer, saner world for every man, woman and child to live in.

May all men and women of good will seize this solemn occasion to say "Never again" to such crimes, no matter their political inspiration, so that all nations, as well as this Organisation, truly respect the life, liberty and dignity of every human being. With serious political will, humankind's moral and spiritual resources will surely be able, once and for all, to transform our respective cultures, so that all the world's peoples learn to treasure life and promote peace.

Thank you, Mr President.

[00121-02.01] [Original text: English]
